

## **Week of April 29, 2002: MaineDOT Flash Facts**

### **Topic: Teen Driving**

#### **Driver safety questions:**

- What is the most common crash related factor for teenage drivers? (Driver inattention and distraction)
- What are the odds that a 16 or 17 year old driver will be involved in a crash this year? (1 out of 4)
- What percent of teenage crash fatalities are the result of unsafe speed? (40%)
- What is the leading cause of death for young people aged 15-20? (Car Crashes)

#### **Openers and Basic Crash Facts:**

- 16,000 16 and 17 year olds have Maine driver's licenses.
- Teenagers are bright, quick learners and have faster reaction times than many adults. But becoming a skilled driver takes years of experience.
- You are 16 years old and you just got your license! But did you know that your age group is the most at risk on the road?
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of fatalities for young people.
- 1 out of 4 sixteen year old drivers is in a crash each year. That is four times greater than for all Maine drivers.
- "Driver Inattention and Distraction" is the most frequent crash factor for drivers under 20.
- 16 and 17 year olds are 4 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than drivers over 30.
- In 2000, two thirds of the 16-18 year olds killed or severely injured were not wearing seat belts.

#### **Safety Tips:**

- Don't take chances. If you feel that: making the turn; the pass; or going through the intersection is risky, then don't gamble.
- 16 to 19 year olds involved in crashes are 50% more likely to be tired or fatigued than those over 30. Never drive when tired. Candy bars, coffee, music and open windows do not help.
- Changing the CD, operating a cell phone or checking out what your passengers are doing may only take 2 seconds, but at 50 miles per hour, a car travels 150 feet in that short time.
- Teenage drivers involved in crashes are found to be inattentive or distracted 30% more often than their adult counterparts.
- Unsafe speed, failure to yield the right of way and following too close are all frequent factors in crashes involving teenager drivers.
- Driving demands your full attention. Concentrate on your driving and watch what others are doing on the road.
- Always wear your seatbelt, and show you care about others in the car by making sure they buckle up, too.
- With proms coming up:
  - Make a plan and let your parents know what it is.
  - Stay alcohol and drug free.
  - If drugs or alcohol are present in a vehicle, find an alternate safe ride.